

precedent, and a faith in the possibility of something better. It irritates me to be told how things have always been done. I defy the tyranny of precedent. I go for anything new that might improve the past." Her motivation as well as her devotion to humanity led Clara Barton to found the American Red Cross in 1881.

Today we celebrate the 121st anniversary of the American Red Cross, which is one of the most renowned charitable organizations in our nation. It is made up of over a million Red Cross volunteers who provide much needed relief services to families, communities and countries around the world in times of crisis.

When unexpected disasters hit, the Red Cross is prepared. For example, the American Red Cross coordinates the collection of blood and ensures that the safest blood is available to save the lives of our armed service members and lives in over 5,000 hospitals across the country.

Internationally, the Red Cross has been active in helping millions of people fight malnutrition and communities gain access to such basic and vital needs as safe drinking water.

Each year, the American Red Cross quickly responds to more than 67,000 disasters, including transportation accidents, house fires, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, and tornadoes.

One instance of the Red Cross's exemplary and timely response to a disaster was after a lethal tornado tore through my District in Southern Maryland on April 28th. Without delay, the Red Cross was on the scene to provide help after one of the fiercest tornado disasters ever on the East Coast.

Approximately 230 Red Cross volunteers poured in from across the nation to join 100 local volunteers. They worked tirelessly to help community members in their time of need by quickly erecting shelters and administering food, clothing, emergency medication and grief counseling.

As I walked through the streets of La Plata, stepping over the wires, rubble and debris of the once vibrant community, it was evident that there was a lot of work ahead for residents to overcome this tragedy. Fortunately, as a result of help from service organizations like the Red Cross, government officials and agencies, and citizens, it is clear that La Plata will rebuild and come back stronger than ever.

The Charles County Red Cross Chapter is a shining example of the dedication of the Red Cross, and why La Plata will persevere and once again thrive. The same evening that the tornado completely wiped out the Chapter building and all of their resources in La Plata, the Red Cross leaders and volunteers set up a temporary Disaster Operation Center in a vacant store building in Waldorf.

Since 1917, the county's Chapter has been instrumental in providing disaster preparation and care services. The Chapter plans to rebuild, just like the La Plata community will rebuild, and continue to dedicate time and energy to the citizens of La Plata.

The American Red Cross, since it was founded, has been instrumental in relieving the suffering and the saving lives of our local, national and international communities.

And thus it's with great gratitude and honor that I commend the American Red Cross today on its 121st anniversary. On behalf of the citizens of the 5th Congressional District of Maryland, who were affected by this most re-

cent natural disaster, as well as the millions of Americans whose lives have been bettered by this wonderful organization, I wish it only the best in the years to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ST. JOHN NEUMANN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor I take this opportunity to recognize St. John Neumann as an institute of education, dedicated to providing a firm foundation for its community's youth. Established in 1977 in Pueblo Colorado, St. John became the new beacon of light for all who sought to provide their children with the option of a private education. It is with highest praise that I recognize St. John's 25th year of operation.

Each day, 230 students convene to mature and study in an atmosphere which embraces every child's eagerness to learn. Instructors provide a one-on-one relationship with students, tailoring the instructor's dexterity to the child's ability. Additionally, St. John promotes parental involvement in their child's education, and seeks to provide an atmosphere comparable to that of a family gathering.

Marking St. John Neumann's 25th anniversary of operation, this year's graduating class will be prepared for the journey ahead, confidently supported by a firm education at an extraordinary school. Many senior administrators have watched St. John grow and develop into a distinguished, highly acclaimed establishment within its community.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I applaud an institution which provides its community with the groundwork to build a better future. St. John Neumann strengthens the integrity and character of each of its students. I commend the hard work and diligence which the faculty, community, and students have contributed to place St. John Neumann Catholic School amongst the leaders in education today.

VETERANS APPRECIATION MONTH

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the hundreds of thousands of men and women who have bravely served their country in the Armed Forces, protecting freedom for all Americans.

Veterans earn a great number of positive qualities through their service, including experience, maturity, leadership and loyalty, which make them valuable and competitive candidates for employment.

The residents of the State of California and I are committed to ensuring that our nation's Veterans are treated with the respect that they deserve, and to promoting employer interest in hiring those individuals who have selflessly given their time in service of their country.

In my home state, May 2002 is "Veterans Appreciation Month," and I would like to take

this opportunity to bring the benefits of hiring veterans to the attention of all American employers.

I thank our country's veterans for their sacrifices, applaud employers who hire these courageous men and women, and I yield back the balance of my time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, May 20, 2002 I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall Nos. 171, 172, and 173. The votes I missed include rollcall vote 171 on Suspending the Rules and Agreeing to H. Con. Res. 314; rollcall vote 172 on Suspending the Rules and Agreeing to H. Con. Res. 165; and rollcall vote 173 on Suspending the Rules and Agreeing to H. Con. Res. 309.

Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 171, 172, and 173.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my District on Tuesday, May 20, 2002, and I would like the record to indicate how I would have voted had I been present.

For rollcall vote No. 171, the resolution recognizing the members of AMVETS for their service to the Nation and supporting the goal of AMVETS National Charter Day, I would have voted "aye."

For rollcall vote No. 172, the resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that continual research and education into the cause and cure for fibroid cancer be addressed, I would have voted "aye."

For rollcall vote No. 173, the resolution Recognizing the Importance of Good Cervical Health and of Detecting Cervical Cancer During its Earliest Stages, I would have voted "aye."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FRUITA MONUMENT HIGH SCHOOL

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Fruita Monument High School in Fruita, Colorado for their incredible acts of patriotism and loyalty. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Monument High honored the bravery of our American citizens by creating a beautiful, patriotic mosaic. Today I applaud the spirit and dedication of the students and faculty of Monument High, and I recognize the efforts and achievements of such artists.